

AUGUSTINE ON PREDESTINATION; A SOME QUAESTIONES DISPUTATAE REVISITED

Augustine's view of predestination is both much discussed and much debated¹. Here it is not my intention to present a complete survey of Augustine's development and "final" position regarding predestination. This is something which systematic theologians have done repeatedly. A good example of the latter is G. Kraus' *Vorherbestimmung. Traditionelle Prädestinationslehre im Licht gegenwärtiger Theologie* (Ökumenische Forschungen, II. Soteriologische Abteilung. V. Vorherbestimmung), Freiburg, Basel, Vienna, 1977². Recent works on Augustine's ideas about grace and predestination often lack any reference to Kraus' book³. Others, which do manage to mention it in the bibliography⁴, often fail to pay appropriate attention to its nuances.

1. Presentation of Kraus' position

Kraus' presentation is, by any standard, very coherent. It is firmly grounded in a serious reading of both Augustine and the secondary literature. Kraus emphasizes that in the *De libero arbitrio* God is presented as one who does not coerce human beings⁵ and that, even in the *Expositio quarundam propositionum ex Epistula ad Romanos*, grace does not override free will⁶. Human beings receive power as a result of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. It is through the Spirit that God's love is communicated to them. However, perseverance in the

¹ The literature on this topic is abundant; see, e.g., S. IODICE, *Legge e Grazia in S. Agostino*, Napels, 1977; J.P. BURNS, *The Development of Augustine's Doctrine of Operative Grace* (Études augustiniennes), Paris, 1980; D. OGILARI, *Gratia et certamen. The Relationship between Grace and Free Will in the Discussion of Augustine with the So-called Semipelagians* (BETL, 169), Leuven, 2004 (with an impressive bibliography).

² This is not to say that Kraus' study is above critique. Cf. *infra*.

³ See, e.g., P.-M. HOMBERT, *Gloria gratiae. Se glorifier en Dieu, principe et fin de la théologie augustiniennne de la grâce* (Collection des Études Augustiniennes. Série Antiquité, 148), Paris, 1996. Also note that there is no reference to the book of Kraus in the otherwise very exhaustive bibliography in the *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*.

⁴ See, e.g., J.M.J. LANGE VAN RAVENSWAAY, *Augustinus totus noster. Das Augustinverständnis bei Johannes Calvin* (Forschungen zur Kirchen- und Dogmengeschichte, 45), Göttingen, 1990; J. LÖSSL, *Intellectus Gratiae. Die erkenntnistheoretische und hermeneutische Dimension der Gnadenlehre Augustins von Hippo* (Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae, 38), Leiden, New York & Köln, 1997.

⁵ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 30.

⁶ Cf. *Expositio* 60, PL 35, 2078.

faith is a task specifically reserved for the human will. Consequently, eternal life is received as a merit. On this level, Kraus speaks of "bedingte Prädestination die bedingt ist durch die vorausgehenden menschlichen Verdienste"⁷. He also notes that, after the radical change in *Ad Simplicianum* (396-397), Augustine holds an "unbedingte Prädestination", a "Vorherbestimmung, die durch reinen Beschluss Gottes, völlig unabhängig von menschlichen Wollen und Tun, geschieht"⁸. From *Ad Simplicianum* onwards, according to Kraus, Augustine forfeited any meaningful concept of the freedom of the human will. Human merits no longer play an important role in the process of salvation and sanctification. Election is based solely upon God's plan⁹. Grace is needed in order to believe, in order to live a good life, in order to persevere. Without grace, "richtet der menschliche Wille nichts aus"¹⁰. This grace is irresistible, absolutely gratuitous, absolutely efficacious. Adam's fall resulted in the condemnation of all human beings. All belong to the *massa damnata*, the *massa peccati*. It is only because of God's mercy that any are elected from out of this mass¹¹. Augustine did not consider this election as unjust or as the result of God's arbitrariness. It was simply something "incomprehensibile" (cf. Rom. 11,33)¹². Regarding the absolute gratuity of this gift, Kraus emphasizes that Augustine surrendered the last remnants of a positive, human capability to do the good in favour of an absolutely uninhibited and absolutely prior divine activity. Although, on a formal level, the free will may be said to continue to exist, in Kraus' view, it seems to be more of a *res inanis*¹³. All is

⁷ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, pp. 30-31.

⁸ V.H. DRECOLL, *Die Entstehung der Gnadenlehre Augustinus* (Beiträge zur historischen Theologie, 109), Tübingen, 1999, although he was not specifically engaging Kraus' position, argued convincingly that *Ad Simplicianum* I,2 should not be seen as a "rupture" or departure from Augustine's previously developed doctrine of grace; cf. pp. 218-250; pp. 358-359.

⁹ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 31, with reference to *Ad Simplicianum* I,2,6, CCL 44, p. 31.

¹⁰ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 32 (with many references to *Ad Simplicianum*).

¹¹ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 33, with references to *Ad Simplicianum* I,2,17, CCL 44, p. 43; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 6,11, PL 44, 969; 8,14, 8,15, PL 44, 971; 20,41, PL 44, 989-990; *De dono perseverantiae* 8,16, PL 45, 1002; 8,17, PL 45, 1003; 9,23, PL 45, 1005-1006; 11,25, PL 45, 1007-1008; 12,28, PL 44, 1009-1010. V. GROSSI, *Il termine "Praedestinatio" tra il 420-435: dalla linea agostiniana dei "Salvati" a quella di "Salvati e dannati"*, in *Augustinianum* 25 (1985) 27-64 presents a much more nuanced view.

¹² KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 33.

¹³ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 36; references to *De dono perseverantiae* 13,33, PL 45, 1013; *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 16,32, PL 44, 900-901; 17,33, PL 44, 901.

attributed to God: the *initium fidei*¹⁴, the gift of perseverance¹⁵, and the absolute gratuity of predestination¹⁶. Predestination is situated in God's eternal foreknowledge¹⁷. This is clearly demonstrated in that a small minority of children are baptized, while others, because they remain unbaptized, are eternally lost¹⁸, just as it is also illustrated in the life and passion of Christ¹⁹. This predestination is infallible and irresistible; it is "unerschütterliche Sicherheit"²⁰. Kraus speaks in this case of a complete determination of human beings' lives and destinies²¹, of a necessity to sin²², realised by God, and this both on the level of inclination and on the level of realisation²³. This predestination is further characterized by its particularity. Augustine speaks of a fixed number, of a remnant of the saved in comparison to the almost numberless number of the condemned. This forces him to interpret 1 Tim. 2,4 (cf. *infra*) in such a way that the *omnes* is understood to refer only to the predestined. He pays especial attention to the *vult* (i.e. to God's will or desire)²⁴. This is due to the fact that, since the fall, "bleibt dem Menschen nichts Gutes mehr, keinerlei Kraft und keinerlei Verdienst"²⁵. Because of the fall and its effects (especially that of both physical and spiritual death, which, for Augustine, was a completely just judgment), salvation is only possible by God's grace through the unique redeemer and mediator, Jesus Christ. This salvation is not meant for all, but for some²⁶.

This predestination is a mystery: grace and free will are both subjected to God's absolute sovereignty²⁷. Augustine therefore sug-

¹⁴ See, e.g., *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, 8,16, PL 44, 972; 11,22, PL 44, 976.

¹⁵ *De dono perseverantiae* 13,33, PL 45, 1012; 7,15, PL 45, 1002.

¹⁶ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 6,15, PL 44, 890-891; *De dono perseverantiae* 8,20; PL 45, 1004; 7,14, PL 45, 1001; 21,54, PL 45, 1026-1027.

¹⁷ Cf. *De dono perseverantiae* 21,56, PL 45, 1028; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 10,19, PL 44, 974-975.

¹⁸ *De dono perseverantiae* 11,25, PL 45, 1007-1008; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 12,23, PL 44, 977.

¹⁹ *De dono perseverantiae* 24,67, PL 45, 1033-1034.

²⁰ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 37; references to *De correptione et gratia* 9,20-21, CSEL 92; pp. 241-244; 7,14, CSEL 92, p. 234; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 17,34, PL 44; 985-986; *De dono perseverantiae* 17,41; PL 44, 1018-1019; 18,47, PL 44, 1022-1033.

²¹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 20,41, PL 44, 906-907; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 20,41; PL 44, 990.

²² *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 20,41, PL 44, 906; 21,42, PL 44, 907.

²³ With reference to *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 21,42, PL 44, 906.

²⁴ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 39 (with many references).

²⁵ With reference to *De dono perseverantiae* 7,13, PL 44, 1001.

²⁶ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, pp. 40-41.

²⁷ *De dono perseverantiae* 11,25, PL 44, 1007; 13,32, PL 44, 1012.

gests that sometimes it might be wise not to speak about it to those who cannot understand it²⁸.

In his conclusion, Kraus first sums up the positive elements of Augustine's thinking on predestination. It is a valuable critique of human pride, contributes to the growth of humility, gives all the praise and honour to God, and leads to a rediscovery of the biblical emphasis on grace. On the negative side, Kraus notes elements such as the loss of the freedom of the will, the *necessitas peccandi*, an excessive emphasis on the irresistible grace, the complete passivity of human beings, the particularity of salvation and the incorrect reading and application of Paul. According to Kraus, in this, Augustine seems to have left the realm of exegesis and has begun to treat Scripture as mere fodder for speculation²⁹.

Space does not permit further detailed interaction with Kraus' view. However, in what follows, I intend to illustrate that the reality of a certain ambivalence in Augustine must be taken in to account if we are to do justice to all the nuances of the bishop of Hippo's thinking. In other words, I will try to show that a merely systematic approach tends to simplify the otherwise complex "Augustinian system".

2. Preliminary remarks

In opposition to what is often said³⁰, the doctrine of predestination as such did not play an important role in Augustine's anti-Pelagian oeuvre. Note, for example, the following *loci* where Augustine uses the term.

In *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II,26³¹, Augustine discusses the question of why no human being lives sinlessly. Simply put, this is because they do not genuinely desire to³². Indeed, they do not want to do what is right, either because they do not know what it is or because they do not find it attractive³³. The vices of ignorance

²⁸ *Ibidem*.

²⁹ KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, pp. 44ff.

³⁰ See KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 27; G. NYGREN, *Das Prädestinationsproblem in der Theologie Augustins* (StTL, 12) Lund & Göttingen, 1956, pp. 8f.

³¹ CSEL 60, pp. 98-99.

³² *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II,26, CSEL 60, p. 98: "Quia homines nolunt."

³³ *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II,26, CSEL 60, p. 98: "Nolunt homines facere quod iustum est, sive quia latet an iustum sit sive quia non delectat."

and weakness are invoked in order to explain why human beings do not will what they should will. However, with the help of God's grace, people become able to do what they should do. Augustine adds: if they do not want to do it, it is their fault, not God's, for "they were predestined either to be damned because of their sinful pride or to have that same pride judged and corrected, if they are children of mercy"³⁴. Here, it would seem that predestination to condemnation is based upon a person's own sinful pride, not upon any predetermined judgment made in eternity past.

In *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II,47³⁵, Augustine underlines the fact that through Adam sin entered the world and through it death and that death was passed on to all human beings (Rom. 5,12). As a consequence, human beings, as long as they are subject to carnal generation and live in this corruptible world, cannot be called absolutely sinless, apart from Christ, who reconciles Creator and creation through the forgiveness of sins. Christ will never deny his grace to those he predestined *per certissimam praescientiam et iustissimam beneficentiam* for eternal life³⁶. Here, it is evident that predestination is related to foreknowledge and the underserved kindness of the Saviour. One can not speak here of an "unbedingte Prädestination"³⁷.

The link foreknowledge-predestination is also present in *De spiritu et littera* 5,7³⁸. To live a good life is a gift of God. This is true not only because God gave human beings a free will, without which no one lives either a good or a bad life – a position Augustine never abandoned: if there is no free will, there can be no meaningful talk of ethics. We know that God gave us a genuinely free will both because he gave the law to us in order to show us how to live and because he has poured out his love into the hearts of those (Rom. 5,5) he foreknew through the Holy Spirit in order that he might predestine them³⁹. He

³⁴ *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II,26, CSEL 60, p. 99: "Qua (grace) ut non adiuvetur, in ipsis itidem causa est, non in Deo, sive damnandi praedestinati sunt propter iniquitatem superbiae sive contra ipsam suam superbiam iudicandi et erudiendi, si filii sunt misericordiae."

³⁵ CSEL 60, pp. 117-118.

³⁶ *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* II,47, CSEL 60, p. 118: "Idem ipse dominus noster hanc suam medellam nullis generis humani temporibus ante ultimum futurum adhuc iudicium denegavit eis, quos per certissimam praescientiam et iustissimam beneficentiam secum regnatos in vitam praedestinavit aeternam."

³⁷ Also in *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* I,32, CSEL 60, p. 3 and II,43, CSEL 60, p. 114 the word "praedestinati" is used, but again, there is no further development of the idea.

³⁸ CSEL 60, p. 159.

³⁹ A.-M. LA BONNARDIÈRE, *Le verset paulinien Rom. V,5 dans l'œuvre de saint Augustin*, in *Augustinus Magister* II, Paris, 1954, pp. 657-665.

predestined them in order that he might call them; he called them in order that he might justify them, and he justified them in order that he might glorify them (Rom. 8,28ff.)⁴⁰.

A nearly-identical use of Rom. 8,28ff. also occurs in *De spiritu et littera* 24,40⁴¹ and in *De natura et gratia* 5,5⁴². In the latter text, Augustine stresses that salvation comes through Christ alone and not on the basis of our merits. Therefore, one can only thank God for his mercy since he sets free only those he wants to set free. Indeed, in his justice, he could have condemned all. Predestination is also linked to foreknowledge in this passage, but, at least here, Augustine offers little commentary on how the two go together⁴³. When Augustine mentions that people are predestined *ad interitum*, the context makes clear that this happens on the basis of God's foreknowledge⁴⁴.

In *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* II,22⁴⁵, Augustine is paraphrasing Rom. 8,28ff. in order to challenge Julian's position that the good will or intention can be present in human beings *sine adiutorio Dei* and that human beings are therefore worthy of God's grace. When Augustine states that those who have been elected, have been elected *ante constitutionem mundi*, this is illustrated with the story of Jacob and Esau (Rom. 9,11-13), is exegetically based on the *multi vocati, pauci electi* idea of Mt. 20,16 and, in so far as the *propositum* is concerned, is supported by a reference to 2 Tim. 1,8-10⁴⁶.

⁴⁰ *De spiritu et littera* 5,7, CSEL 60, p. 159: "Quia per Spiritum sanctum diffundit caritatem in cordibus eorum quos praescivit ut praedestinaret, praedestinavit ut vocaret, vocavit ut iustificaret, iustificavit ut glorificaret."

⁴¹ CSEL 60, pp. 193-194.

⁴² CSEL 60, p. 236.

⁴³ Similar interpretations can be found in *De perfectione iustitiae hominis* 15,35, CSEL 42, p. 36; 20,43, CSEL 42, p. 46; *De gestis Pelagii* 3,7, CSEL 42, pp. 58-59 (in this case, those who will not be saved, are so, because they "se idoneos ad se ipsos regendos putant et praefidenti cervice propriae voluntatis illum dedignatur habere rectorem." Both *De gestis Pelagii* 17,41, CSEL 42, p. 97 and 35,64, CSEL 42, p. 119 are discussing the correct meaning of a statement of Pelagius, but do not contribute to a better understanding of Augustine's own reflections on predestination.

⁴⁴ *De perfectione iustitiae hominis* 13,31, CSEL 42, p. 32: "In eo genere hominum, quod praedestinatum est ad interitum. Super hos enim respexit Dei praescientia protulitque sententiam."

⁴⁵ CSEL 60, pp. 483-484.

⁴⁶ Cf. A. ZUMKELLER, "Propositum" in seinem spezifisch christlichen und theologischen Verständnis bei Augustinus, in *Homo spiritualis. Festgabe für L. Verheijen zu seinem 70. Geburtstag*. Herausgegeben von C. MAYER, unter Mitwirkung von K.H. CHELIUS (*Cassiciacum*, 38), Würzburg, 1987, 295-310; for an excellent study on this topic as such, see T.G. RING, "Electio" in der Gnadenlehre Augustins, in A. ZUMKELLER & A. KRUEMMEL (eds.), *Traditio Augustiniana. Studien über Augustinus und seine Rezeption. Festgabe für Willigis Eckermann OSA zum 60. Geburtstag* (*Cassiciacum*, 46), Würzburg, 1994, pp. 39-79.

The same imprecision vis-à-vis the doctrine of predestination is, with one exception, also present in *Contra Iulianum*: only those who have received the spirit of God and who know what they have received from God, belong to the number of the predestined⁴⁷.

The aforementioned exception is found in *Contra Iulianum* V,14⁴⁸. Commenting on a reference Julian makes to Rom. 2,4, Augustine agrees that God's goodness leads to repentance, but, he adds, God does so only for those he predestined. Through his patience he allows room for repentance, since he does not want anyone to perish. Those who are elected, are called according to his plan. Quoting a series of Scriptural texts, Augustine concludes that these people are chosen *electionem gratiae*⁴⁹. Those, who are elected and predestined, even those *qui pessimam duxerunt vitam*, will not die, for God shows them and their brothers the depth of the evil from which grace alone can set them free through the one mediator, Christ. Then, Augustine adds, those who are not elected, are born *ad utilitatem* of the elect, for God does not create anyone either without purpose or by chance, just as is he not ignorant of the good he will produce from them⁵⁰. He immediately adds that these people because of the hardness of their unrepentant hearts, store up for themselves anger for the day of wrath, the day upon which all are repaid according to their works. Augustine also stresses the importance of prayer: we pray in order to be saved, in order to invoke God's mercy. Finally, he states that God does not make our wills evil, but he makes use of them precisely as he wills⁵¹. These nuances make clear that one cannot derive a "pure predestination"-line from this passage.

In his final and most extensive work against the Pelagians, the *Opus imperfectum contra Iulianum*, there is only one reference to predestination⁵².

Often, 1 Tim. 2,4: "Deus omnes homines vult salvos fieri, et ad agnitionem veritatis venire", is invoked by both Julian and modern commentators as an argument against Augustine's predestination doctrine⁵³.

⁴⁷ *Contra Iulianum* IV,16, PL 44, 745.

⁴⁸ PL 44, 791-792.

⁴⁹ Quoted are 2 Petr. 3,9; 2 Tim. 2,19; Rom. 8,28-30; Mt. 22,14; 2 Tim. 1,8-9; Eph. 1,4; Rom. 4,17; see *Contra Iulianum* V,14, PL 44, 791-792.

⁵⁰ *Contra Iulianum* V,14, PL 792.

⁵¹ *Contra Iulianum* V,15, PL 44, 793: "Qui non facit voluntates malas, sed utitur eis ut voluerit, cum aliquid inique velle non possit."

⁵² *Opus imperfectum* I,94, CSEL 85,1, p. 109.

⁵³ HOMBERT, *Gloriae gratiae*, p. 315 speaks about Augustine's exegesis of this passage as "ne peut satisfaire". With regard to Augustine's position about this text, see A. SAGE, *La volonté salvifique universelle de Dieu dans la pensée de saint Augustin*, in *Recherches augustiniennes* 3 (1965) 107-131.

In the Pelagian controversy, Augustine himself seldom discussed this text. In fact, he employed it only three times in all of his writings against the Pelagians: *De spiritu et littera* 33,57-58, *De gestis Pelagii* 24,48 and *Contra Iulianum* IV,42.44.

In *De spiritu et littera* 33,57-58⁵⁴, the question of whether the will by which we believe is itself a gift of God or the result of the free will's own activity is discussed. If one denies the first position, how can he answer the Paul of 1 Cor. 4,7: "Quid enim habes quod non accepisti? Si autem et accepisti, quid gloriaris quasi non acceperis". On the other hand, Augustine is well aware that 1 Cor. 4,7 causes problems *in se*. An interpretation in which one could boast because one has received the *voluntas credendi* thanks to God's grace, gives unbelievers and sinners an excuse for their profligate state. They do not believe because God did not give them the grace that they required (cf. Rom. 9-11)⁵⁵. Augustine contends that both grace and free will are involved⁵⁶. At the same time, if we believe because of something inherent in our own nature, why does not everybody receive this grace, since God is the creator of all human beings? On the other hand, if our belief is a gift of God, why is it not given to all since in 1 Tim. 2,4 we read that God wills that all human beings be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth? Augustine stresses that the free will is given to the rational soul as part of its nature, but this gift is a *media vis*, which is able to turn either to faith or to unbelief. However, Augustine continues, this kind of free will is not the will by which one believes. Only the one who is *vocante Deo* ever truly desires to believe⁵⁷. Augustine explains 1 Tim. 2,4 by noting that God wants all human beings to be saved and come to the knowledge of truth, but not so that God deprives them of free choice: on the contrary, all will be judged

⁵⁴ CSEL 60, pp. 215-217.

⁵⁵ *De spiritu et littera* 33,57, CSEL 60, pp. 215-216: "Respondere possumus: ecce habemus voluntatem credendi, quam non accepimus, ecce ubi gloriamur, quod non acceperimus, si autem dixerimus etiam huiusmodi voluntatem non esse nisi donum Dei, rursus metuendum est, ne infideles atque impii non immerito se veluti iuste excusare videantur ideo non credidisse, quod dare illis Deus istam noluit voluntatem."

⁵⁶ On this point, *De spiritu et littera* 33,57, CSEL 60, p. 216 is very clear: "Sed credimus, ut inpetremus hanc gratiam, si utique voluntate credimus."

⁵⁷ *De spiritu et littera* 33,58, CSEL 60, p. 216: "Quod liberum arbitrium naturaliter adtributum a creatore animae rationali illa media vis est, quae vel intendi ad fidem vel inclinari ad infidelitatem potest et ideo nec istam voluntatem, qua credit Deo, dici potest homo habere quam non acceperit, quando quidem vocante Deo surgit de libero arbitrio, quod naturaliter cum crearetur accepit."

according to their good or bad use of it⁵⁸. According to Augustine, this does not mean that the will of God is defeated: people act against God's will and for that reason they deprive themselves of the great and supreme good of salvation. This proves that they hold God's mercy in contempt⁵⁹. It will be clear, that in this case Augustine's interpretation of 1 Tim. 2,4 is an "open" one and that it does not offer arguments that support a rigid doctrine of predestination.

In *De gestis Pelagii* 24,48⁶⁰, 1 Tim. 2,4 is quoted as part of an excerpt taken from a letter of James and Timasius that has been integrated in Augustine's work. There, Augustine offers no detailed comments regarding 1 Tim. 2:4.

More substantial is the reference to 1 Tim 2,4 in *Contra Iulianum* IV,42.44. Julian refers to this verse in a context in which he criticizes Augustine's view of grace. According to Julian, Augustine's view of grace necessitates that people are made good necessarily⁶¹. Augustine does not expect any effort from the human will and, therefore, seems to hold a position which contradicts Mt. 7,7-8: "Ask and you will receive; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives; everyone who seeks finds; and the door will be opened for everyone who knocks"⁶².

In Julian's view, God, who wants that all human beings be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth, will open the door for those who knock⁶³. In his response, Augustine again brings up the question of the children. Obviously, some are baptised without willing it. Those who are baptised are saved. Others are not baptised and, hence, will not be saved. Why? Augustine does not know the answer, but makes it clear that the following three elements are essential to him: all who are saved, are saved through Christ; God is good and just; God is almighty. Because of the first point, the *all* in 1 Tim. 2,4 must be interpreted as referring to all who are justified in Christ, the only mediator between God and human beings (cf. 1 Tim. 2,5). The central position of Christ as Saviour compels Augustine to accept a

⁵⁸ *De spiritu et littera* 33,58, CSEL 60, p. 216: "Vult autem Deus omnes homines fieri et in agnitionem veritatis venire, non sic tamen, ut eis adimat liberum arbitrium, quo vel bene vel male utentes iustissime iudicentur."

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*.

⁶⁰ CSEL 60, p. 102.

⁶¹ *Ad Turbantium* frg. 121, CCSL 88, p. 121: "Dicis etiam illud vestrum contra Christi gratiam saepe a vobis inaniter dictum, quod scilicet appellatione gratiae bonos fieri homines fatali necessitate dicamus."

⁶² Cf. *Ad Turbantium*, frg. 122, CCSL 88, p. 367.

⁶³ *Ad Turbantium*, frg. 123, CCSL 88, p. 367.

restrictive reading of all, for de facto, not all will be saved, but only those who believe and persevere.

He further supports his position with John 6,44: "None can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draws them," and with John 6,66: "None can come to me unless it has been given to them by my Father." Concerning the second element: the axiom that God is both good and just must lead to the following conclusion: some children enter the kingdom of God by grace because God is good and other children do not enter because God is just⁶⁴.

As far as I can see, Augustine never refers to his work *Ad Simplicianum* when debating with the Pelagians. In *De praedestinatione sanctorum* and *De dono perseverantiae*, however, he regularly refers to that work in order to show the unity and consistency of his positions. That he considered it a clear exposition of his views is indicated by the fact that Augustine suggested that Hilarius and Prosper give this book to the monks of Gaul so that they can become familiar with Augustine's position⁶⁵.

One must also admit that the opponents in Hadrumetum and Gaul were never accused of heresy. They are called *fratres*⁶⁶ and *carissimi*⁶⁷ who will certainly come to the truth about predestination if only they will continue to walk in the same way "in quod pervenerunt"⁶⁸. Augustine explicitly acknowledges that they confess both the doctrine of original sin and the necessity of faith in the death of Christ for the justification of the sinner⁶⁹. They are not called *inimici gratiae*⁷⁰. Therefore it seems fair to conclude that Augustine's teachings about predestination can, at least for the most part, be reduced to the works written either at the request of a colleague or as clarifications for brethren: *Ad Simplicianum*, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, *De correptione et gratia*, *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, and *De dono perseverantiae*.

⁶⁴ Cf. *Contra Iulianum* IV,42-46, PL 44, 760-761.

⁶⁵ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 4,8, PL 44, 966: "Nam si curassent, invenissent istam quaestionem secundum veritatem divinarum Scripturarum solutam in primo libro duorum, quos ad beatae memoriae Simplicianum scripsi... Nisi forte non eos noverunt; quod si ita est, facite ut noverint."

⁶⁶ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* I,1, PL 44, 881; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 1,2, PL 44, 961.

⁶⁷ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,7, PL 44, 886.

⁶⁸ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 1,2, PL 44, 961.

⁶⁹ Therefore, Augustine underlines: "Retenta ergo ista in quae pervenerunt, plurimum eos a Pelagianorum errore discernunt."; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 1,2, PL 44, 961.

⁷⁰ Against KRAUS, *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 34.

3. Did Augustine give up the freedom of the will in his Semi-pelagian oeuvre?⁷¹

One of the negative aspects of Augustine's position, according to Kraus, was that he surrendered the existence of genuine freedom. Not surprisingly, Augustine, in his writings to the monks of Hadrumetum and Marseille, denies this. He even boasts that he, not the Pelagians, is the *defensor liberi arbitrii*⁷². In the beginning of *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Augustine explicitly states that one of the intentions of this work is to react against those who "sic gratiam Dei defendunt, ut negent hominis liberum arbitrium"⁷³. I believe that Augustine was sincere when he made these claims.

In his *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Augustine explicitly states that Scripture clearly and explicitly proves the existence of the free will. In this regard, he refers to God's requirements, which are only meaningful if human beings can realise them and by doing so can receive a reward. God's precepts do not make sense if there is no free will that can fulfil them in order to receive the promised rewards⁷⁴. Human sins are clear evidence of the existence of the free will⁷⁵. Augustine concludes his defence of the existence of the free will with two assertions: "Velle enim et nolle propriae voluntatis est"⁷⁶ and "Semper est (...) in nobis voluntas libera, sed non semper est bona"⁷⁷. For Augustine, it goes without saying that we will whenever we will and that the "bene vivendum" and "recte agendum" belongs to our free will, but that God operates in such a way so as to insure

⁷¹ J.M. RIST, *Augustine on Free Will and Predestination*, in *Journal of Theological Studies* 20 (1969) 420-447.

⁷² See esp. *Opus imperfectum* III,214, CSEL 85,1, p. 505: "Me non esse liberi arbitrii (...) negatorem, sed potius defensorem Dei gratia confitendo"; cf. also, e.g., *De correptione et gratia* 8,17, CSEL 44, 238: "... secundum gratiam Dei, non contra eam, libertas defenditur voluntatis. Voluntas quippe humana non libertate consequitur gratiam, sed gratia potius libertatem..."

⁷³ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 1,1, PL 44, 881: "Sed quoniam sunt quidem, qui sic gratiam Dei defendunt, ut negent hominis liberum arbitrium, aut quando gratia defenditur, negari existiment liberum arbitrium."

⁷⁴ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 2,2, PL 44, 882: "Quomodo autem revelaverit, commemoro vos, non humano eloquio, sed divino. Primum, quia ipsa divina praecepta homini non prodessent, nisi haberet liberum voluntatis arbitrium, quo ea faciens ad promissa praemia perveniret." See also 2,4, PL 44, 883-884 (with many references to the Old and New Testament).

⁷⁵ Cf. the conclusion at the end of *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 21,3, PL 44, 883: "Ecce apertissime videmus expressum liberum humanae voluntatis arbitrium."

⁷⁶ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 3,5, PL 44, 885.

⁷⁷ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 15,31, PL 44, 899.

that his *electi* will the good⁷⁸. Whenever we do the good, it is really we who do it, but it is God who works in us in such a way that we do it “*praebendo vires efficacissimas*”⁷⁹. In other words, in Augustine’s view, an individual’s meritorious activities and received grace go hand in hand. Even in contexts where Augustine states that grace prevails, he immediately adds that the free will still exists⁸⁰. To confess and believe that God operates in our hearts does not lead Augustine to a denial of the normal experience of the believers that they indeed are willing to believe and to live according to the requirements of faith⁸¹. Indeed, when talking about the story of the Philistines and Arabs, Augustine stresses that the Lord inspired them to come to Israel, but at the same time he is convinced that they came to this land because they themselves wanted to come⁸².

4. Acting under the influence of God’s grace is not contrary to doing what one wants to do

It is fascinating to see that Augustine repeatedly claims that acting according to God’s will is not necessarily opposed to acting according to the natural will of the human being. Grace and free will are not antithetical⁸³: believers, at least some of the time, do what God wants them to do and they are, at the same time, most willing to do so⁸⁴. Indeed, such a way of living will lead to an eternal reward, but even that reward is the result of God’s help and grace⁸⁵. We over-

⁷⁸ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 16,32, PL 44, 900: “Certum est nos velle, cum volumus; sed ille facit ut velimus bonum...”

⁷⁹ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 16,32, PL 44, 900-901.

⁸⁰ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 11,21, PL 44, 899.

⁸¹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 20,41, PL 44, 905. “Satis me disputasse arbitror adversus eos qui gratiam Dei vehementer oppugnant, qua voluntas humana non tollitur...”

⁸² Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 21,42, PL 44, 907.

⁸³ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 21,42, PL 44, 907-908: “imo utrumque verum est, quia et sua voluntate uenerunt, et tamen spiritum eorum dominus suscitavit.” See, in this regard, M. DJUTH, *Stoicism and Augustine’s Doctrine of Human Freedom after 396*, in J. SCHNAUBELT & F. VAN FLETEREN (eds.), *Augustine: Second Founder of the Faith* (Collectanea Augustiniana, 1), New-York-Frankfurt am Main-Paris, 1990, pp. 387-401.

⁸⁴ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 2,4, PL 44, 884: “Neque cum aliquid secundum Deum operatur, alienet hoc a propria voluntate.”

⁸⁵ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,6, PL 44, 885: “... ut ad uitam piam et bonam conuersationem, cui merces aeterna debetur, adiutorio et gratiae Dei locus non relinquatur ...”.

come sin thanks to God's grace, but, Augustine adds, it is a grace which helps the free will⁸⁶. Grace can never be given according to our merits⁸⁷. It is true that grace takes the lead in the process of conversion to the faith and in that of the guiding of the believer in Christian living⁸⁸, but, and this seems to be the crucial point, grace does so in such a way that human beings *sub gratia* love, at least some of the time, the pursuit of obedience. Augustine, speaking about the Spirit's activity, uses verbs such as "accenditur" with respect to the will in order to make clear that, thanks to the Spirit's activity, human beings can be made to be genuinely willing to do what God wants them to do⁸⁹.

Of course, it must be admitted – and this is probably one of the reasons why people sometimes claim that the "late" Augustine has abandoned whatever real and meaningful belief in the freedom of the will that he had once held that free will does not play an important role in *De praedestinatione sanctorum* or *De dono perseverantiae*. This can at least partly be explained by the historical context of those works. On the other hand – and in *De praedestinatione sanctorum* this point is explicitly stated in a context where Augustine is explaining that he had missed the point in his *Expositio* – that to believe and to act belong to our free will and at the same time are given by the Spirit of faith and charity. He adds, that God prepares our will (Prov. 8,35 LXX) but both to believe and to act "utrumque nostrum (sunt), quia non fit nisi volentibus nobis"⁹⁰. In other words, the psychological experience of "I will" remains real, at least on the level of lived experience. That God prepares the will of the elect does not automatically mean that the "credere vel non credere" should not belong to the human beings' free will⁹¹.

In *De dono perseverantiae*, the emphasis on prayer – I will return to this point later – for the non-believers and for the faithful proves that the will is still able to be changed. Meanwhile, it must be stressed that

⁸⁶ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,8, PL 44, 887: "Ergo et uictoria qua peccatum uincitur, nihil aliud est quam donum Dei, in isto certamine adiuvantis liberum arbitrium."

⁸⁷ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 5,13, PL 44, 889: "His et talibus testimoniis diuinis probatur, gratiam Dei non secundum merita nostra dari: quandoquidem non solum nullis bonis, uerum etiam multis meritis malis praecedentibus uidemus datam, et quotidie dari uidemus."

⁸⁸ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 6,13, PL 44, 889-990.

⁸⁹ See, e.g., *De correptione et gratia* 12,38, CSEL 92, p. 266.

⁹⁰ Cf. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 3,7, PL 44, 965.

⁹¹ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 5,10, PL 44, 968: "Non quia credere vel non credere non est in arbitrio voluntatis humanae, sed in electis praeparatur voluntas a domino. Ideo ad ipsam quoque fidem, quae in voluntate est, pertinet, quis enim te discernit."

Augustine seems to be irritated when he reads: "Voluntate sua quisque deserit Deum, ut merito deseratur a Deo", for he adds: "Quis hoc negaverit?"⁹² Does such a sign of irritation not prove that Augustine in no way intends to annihilate human responsibility? The point must be, Augustine continues, that we pray in order that "desereri a Deo" should ultimately not happen. After all, is it not true that nothing happens, if God does not permit it? He alone is the one who is able "a malo in bonum flectere voluntates, et in lapsum pronas convertere, ac dirigere in sibi placitum gressum"⁹³. In other words, Augustine does not seem to exclude that even in the case of the primacy of God's grace, the will in itself still plays a role: to the monks of Hadrumetum it is said that, because of God's grace and their own will, they live a life of continence (Wisdom 8,1)⁹⁴. The victory in the struggle against sin is a gift of God, "in isto certamine adiuvantis liberum arbitrium"⁹⁵.

Moreover, Augustine certainly believed that God is able to act in the heart of human beings, but he did not believe that God did so by means of physical force: "Intus egit, corda tenuit, corda movit, eosque voluntatibus eorum, quas ipse in illis operatus est, traxit"⁹⁶. When one carefully looks at the verbs, one sees that the verbs used are typical of the way in which Augustine describes grace's activity: *movere*, *trahere*, *invitare* etc. They are also verbs that refer to one's psychological experience. One gets the impression that by the use of such verbs Augustine suggests that God takes the human being as his creature seriously. When taking into account these verbs, one must admit that Augustine's point is that one can only be invited if one's will is still in some sense active and in some sense still has a role to play.

Further, as far as I can see, Augustine never gave up the idea of *merita*. In the works to the monks, he speaks explicitly of merits. He even does so in contexts where he is actively defending his views on grace⁹⁷. Of course, the initiative is taken by God, but, once given, our

⁹² *De dono perseverantiae* 6,11, PL 45, 1000.

⁹³ *De dono perseverantiae* 6,12, PL 45, 1000.

⁹⁴ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,7, PL 44, 886: "Quibus autem non est datum, aut nolunt, aut non implent quod volunt; quibus autem datum est, sic volunt ut impleant quod volunt. Itaque, ut hoc verbum, quod non ab omnibus capitur, ab aliquibus capiatur, et Dei donum est, et liberum arbitrium."

⁹⁵ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,8, PL 44, 887.

⁹⁶ *De correptione et gratia* 14,45, CSEL 92, p. 275.

⁹⁷ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 1,1, PL 44, 881: "Propter eos qui hominis liberum arbitrium sic praedicant et defendunt, ut Dei gratiam qua vocamur ad eum et a nostris malis meritis liberamur, et per quam bona merita comparamus quibus ad vitam perveniamus aeternam, negare audeant et conentur auferre, multa iam disseruimus, litterisque mandavimus, quantum nobis Dominus donare dignatus est."

"merita bona incipiunt"⁹⁸. Once justified, the just one lives *ex fide*. This means that he or she acts only – at least part of the time – *per dilectionem*. This lifestyle results in being awarded eternal life by God according to one's deeds⁹⁹. At the same time, Augustine can claim that our merits are gifts of God¹⁰⁰, but this does not mean that our free will is destroyed¹⁰¹. It only means that this will needs the help of grace "ne sine causa voluntati eius iubeatur"¹⁰². But, at the same time, this grace cannot be such "ut propriam perderent voluntatem"¹⁰³.

The next element which further complicates the whole affair is the fact that, on the one hand, the mortification of the works of the flesh is considered to be a gift of God, but that to this the idea is immediately added that: "exigitur tamen a nobis proposito praemio vitae". According to Augustine, the meaning of this is clear: we must mortify the deeds of the flesh and yet, at the same time, it is God who works within us to generate our ability to do this¹⁰⁴. Traces of Pauline thinking are obviously present here. Augustine did not consider the preaching of predestination a hindrance to one's moral life. On the contrary, he believed that it actually helped people in their struggles¹⁰⁵. For Augustine – and here he seems to have been convinced that he was following both the tradition (esp. Cyprian, Ambrose, and Gregory Nazianzus) and Scripture –¹⁰⁶ the belief that God's grace

⁹⁸ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 6,13, PL 44, 889: "Sed plane cum data fuerit, incipiunt esse etiam merita nostra bona, per illam tamen..."; 6,14, PL 44, 890: "Ista utique iam merita sua bona commemorat (=Paul; reference to 2 Tim. 4,6-7); ut post bona merita consequatur coronam, qui post merita mala consecutus est gratiam."

⁹⁹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 7,18, PL 44, 892: "... istam fidem ex qua iustus vivit, id est, quae per dilectionem operatur, ut reddat ei Deus vitam aeternam secundum opera eius."

¹⁰⁰ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 8,20, PL 44, 893.

¹⁰¹ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,8, PL 44, 886: "Neque enim praeciperentur, nisi homo haberet propriam voluntatem, qua divinis praeceptis obediret."; 10,22, PL 44, 894: "Itaque, fratres, debetis quidem per liberum arbitrium non facere mala, et facere bona..."

¹⁰² *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,9, PL 44, 887.

¹⁰³ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 5,12, PL 44, 889.

¹⁰⁴ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 11,22, PL 44, 976: "Ideo enim haec et nobis praecipiuntur, et dona Dei esse monstrantur, ut intelligatur quod et nos ea facimus, et Deus facit ut illa faciamus."

¹⁰⁵ *De dono perseverantiae* 17,41, PL 1019: "Non solum ergo praedicatione praedestinationis ab hoc opere non impeditur, verum et ad hoc adiuvatur, ut cum glorietur, in Domino glorietur."

¹⁰⁶ And one must admit, that Augustine is very confident that he is right: "Hoc scio, neminem contra istam praedestinationem, quam secundum Scripturas sanctas defendimus, nisi errando disputare potuisse."; *De dono perseverantiae* 19,48, PL 45, 1023.

precedes our merits does not contradict the fact that we must be continually exhorted to fulfill God's precepts¹⁰⁷. What Augustine frequently seemed to fear was that people would begin to attribute to themselves the good things they did as if it they had been accomplished by themselves alone¹⁰⁸.

Because of the importance of ideas like "filii Dei", "caritas Dei", and the role of Christ, I am a bit hesitant about the claim that Augustine believed that God predestines to sin¹⁰⁹. In Rom. 9,18: "Cuius vult miseretur, et quem vult obdurat autem secundum iudicium", the *obdurare* is always interpreted either as God permits (*permittere*) that one is seduced "mala eius merita"¹¹⁰, or as God hardens through his just judgement even as Pharaoh hardens himself by his own free wil¹¹¹, or as proof that God, in his perfectly righteous judgement, "digna retribuens"¹¹², because of the "praecedentibus meritis"¹¹³.

According to Kraus¹¹⁴, God should bring about sins. In order to prove this, he refers to *De gratia et libero arbitrio*¹¹⁵: "Quomodo dixerit Dominus huic homini maledicere David, quis sapiens et intelliget? Non enim iubendo dixit, ubi oboedientia laudaretur; sed quod eius voluntatem proprio vitio suo malam in hoc peccatum iudicio suo iusto et occulto inclinavit." Only the words in italics are quoted by Kraus.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. *De dono perseverantiae* 19,49, PL 45, 1023: "Unde supra dicti tractatores excellentissimi divinatorum eloquiorum, et gratiam Dei veram, sicut praedicanda est, praedicarunt, id est, quam nulla merita humana praecedunt; et ad facienda divina praecepta instanter hortati sunt, ut qui haberent donum obedientiae, quibus iussis obediendum esset, audirent." On this chapter, see J. CHÉNÉ, *Sur un texte du "De dono perseverantiae"* (Cap. XIX, n. 49), in REA 6 (1960) 309-313.

¹⁰⁸ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 9,21, PL 44, 894: "Non enim, quia dixit: Deus est enim qui operatur in vobis et velle et operari, pro bona voluntate (Phil. 2,13), ideo liberum arbitrium abstulisse putandus est. Quod si ita esset, non superius dixisset: Cum timore et tremore vestram ipsorum salutem operamini (Phil. 2,12). Quando enim iubetur ut operentur, liberum eorum convenitur arbitrium: sed ideo cum timore et tremore, ne sibi tribuendo quod bene operantur, de bonis tanquam suis extollantur operibus."

¹⁰⁹ D. OGLIARI, *The Role of Christ and the Church in the Light of Augustine's Theory of Predestination*, in ETL 79 (2003) 347-364 argues that, from a systematic theological point of view, because of the predestination, Christ can no longer play a decisive role in the salvation history.

¹¹⁰ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 23,45, PL 44, 910-911.

¹¹¹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 23,45, PL 44, 911. Cf. also, L.F. PIZZOLATO, *L'in-duramento del cuore del Faraone: tra Gregorio di Nissa e Agostino*, in *Augustinianum* 35 (1995) 511-525.

¹¹² *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 8,14, PL 44, 972.

¹¹³ *De dono perseverantiae* 11,25, PL 45, 1007; cf. also *Opus imperfectum* I,141, CSEL 85,1, p. 160.

¹¹⁴ *Vorherbestimmung*, p. 38.

¹¹⁵ PL 44, 906.

In rebuttal to this position, it should be noted that Augustine speaks of a "*voluntas mala proprio suo*". Furthermore, in the same context, Augustine states: "*Nec causa tacita est, cur ei Dominus isto modo dixerit maledicere David, hoc est cor eius malum in hoc peccatum miserit vel dimiserit.*" Obviously, in Augustine's view, the true basis of this evil action is the evil free will of Shemi. The *mittere* is weakened by the *dimittere*, a feature which seems to indicate a desire on Augustine's part to weaken the radically strong position, found in Scripture. Augustine's consistent position is that their will is already evil.

The same can be said about another text quoted by Kraus, *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 21,43¹¹⁶: "*Manifestatur, operari Deum in cordibus hominibus ad inclinandas eorum voluntates quocumque voluerit, sive ad bono pro sua misericordia, sive ad mala pro meritis eorum, iudicio utique suo aliquando aperto, aliquando occulto, semper tamen iusto.*" Again, note that Kraus only quoted the words in italics, but one must admit that the presence of the evil is a prerequisite¹¹⁷. The text explicitly refers to evil deeds (*ad mala pro meritis eorum*), opposed to God's mercy (*misericordia sua*). It is clear that God makes use of the evil will, not that he makes a will evil.

In passing, it is worth mentioning that the Hadrumetum dossier, especially with regard to the role played therein by the Bible, is in many senses unique¹¹⁸. Several texts are used only in discussions "entre doctes théologiens: jamais saint Augustin n'a traité, dans sa catéchèse, ni dans sa prédication pastorale des péripécies bibliques qui font l'objet des remarques présentes. Les écrits aux moines d'Adrumète sont un dossier particulier sur un sujet théologique donné"¹¹⁹. In other words, Augustine was speaking to colleagues, not to the faithful in general.

5. "Harsh predestination" versus God's love

Augustine was posthumously awarded the honorary titles of both *Doctor gratiae* and *Doctor caritatis*. This concern for love also

¹¹⁶ PL 44, 909.

¹¹⁷ It must be underlined that the texts, quoted from Scripture, in *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 21,42, PL 44, 907-909, speak of an activity of God, resulting in evil deeds of human beings.

¹¹⁸ A.-M. LA BONNARDIÈRE, *Quelques remarques sur les citations scripturaires du De gratia et libero arbitrio*, in REA 9 (1963) 77-85.

¹¹⁹ LA BONNARDIÈRE, *a.c.*, p. 84.

plays a role in the works we are considering here. Especially in *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, Augustine collected an impressive dossier of biblical texts which refer clearly and directly to God's love for us as the impetus for both our love for him and our love for others¹²⁰. We love because we were loved first¹²¹. What else, Augustine asks, is the desire for the good than love that comes from God¹²² through Jesus Christ in whom this love is present in its fullest and purest form?¹²³ Indeed, who loved the weak more than Christ, the one who who was made weak and crucified for all?¹²⁴ Every thought or act of human beings can only be qualified as *bonum* if it has been done in love. This is proved by Scripture (as well as by the martyrs)¹²⁵. Even here, however, Augustine will add that they are meaningless if human beings no longer possess a free will¹²⁶. True, it is in human nature's potential to believe and to love, but these can only be genuinely possessed as a result of the gift of grace¹²⁷. In Augustine's perception, this is as it should be: if one has the opportunity to choose either for his own free will or for a will under grace, one would be a fool to choose for the former¹²⁸. Truly just actions are only those actions which are done with and in love (*cum dilectione, cum delectatione iustitiae*). The result is described as sweetness,

¹²⁰ See, e.g., *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 7,16, PL 44, 891; 17,33, PL 44, 901; 17,34, PL 44, 902.

¹²¹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 18,38, PL 44, 904: "Nemo ergo vos fallat, fratres mei: quia nos non diligemus Deum, nisi nos prior ipse diligeret. (...) Gratia nos facit legis dilectores..."; *Opus imperfectum* I,131, CSEL 85,1, p. 144: "Gratia quippe hominem praevenit, ut diligat Deum, qui delectatione operetur bona. Quod et Iohannes apostolus apertissime ostendit, ubi ait: 'Nos diligamus, quoniam prior dilexit nos.' (1 Jh 4,19) Non ergo diligamur, quia dileximus, sed quia dilecti sumus, diligamus."

¹²² *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* II,21, CSEL 60, p. 482: "Quid est enim boni cupiditas nisi caritas, de qua Iohannes apostolus sine ambiguitate loquitur dicens: caritas ex Deo est (1Jh 4,7b)?"; cf. also, e.g., *De dono perseverantiae* 21,56, PL 45, 1028; *Opus imperfectum* I,95, CSEL 85,1, p. 110; II,142, CSEL 85,1, p. 266, etc.

¹²³ *De correptione et gratia* 7,15, CSEL 92, p. 235.

¹²⁴ *De correptione et gratia* 16,49, CSEL 92, p. 280.

¹²⁵ See e.g. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 17,33, PL 44, 901.

¹²⁶ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 18,37, PL 44, 903: "Haec omnia praecepta dilectionis, id est charitatis, quae tanta et talia sunt, ut quidquid se putaverit homo facere bene, si fiat sine charitate, nullo modo fiat bene; haec ergo praecepta charitatis inaniter darentur hominibus, non habentibus liberum voluntatis arbitrium..."

¹²⁷ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 5,10, PL 44, 968: "Proinde posse habere fidem, sicut posse habere charitatem, naturae est hominum: habere autem fidem quemadmodum habere charitatem, gratiae est fidelium."

¹²⁸ Cf. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 11,21, PL 44, 976.

happiness, *suavitas*¹²⁹. Because of this love, the *sarcina Christi* will be a light one¹³⁰. True love is love which finds its origin in God, it is love given by God through grace¹³¹. God operates in our hearts in order to generate love. He has committed himself to bringing it to completion through continual cooperation with us. Because of their love for God, the just of the Old Testament could believe that Jesus Christ was the one to come¹³². The whole content of the Law can be summarized in the fulfilment of the commendment to love God and to love one another¹³³. This love makes the difference between acts done in faith and those done for other, less-authentic motivations. It supersedes knowledge: "Sed maius est donum charitas quam scientia"¹³⁴.

Such love changes peoples' lives. This was certainly the case for Augustine. The sign or fruit that people had experienced God's love, Augustine argued, is that they are transformed into "magni amatores" of God. He never neglected to preach this truth¹³⁵. In history, many examples can be found of people who confessed that what they were, did, believed, was the result of God's love. One may think here not only of Paul, but in fact of the general message of most of the Christian Scriptures. Only if people have experienced God's overwhelming goodness, will they be able to recognize their own weakness and sinfulness. In their weakness, people have experienced God's mercy, a position that, according to Augustine, was shared by the monks of Marseille¹³⁶. He then concludes that God has foreseen (*praescivit*) that it was good for Him to give these gifts to those who are being called¹³⁷. In this regard, I think it is extremely important to stress that, in *De correptione et gratia*, in a context where he is speaking about saints, who, by "nature", are expected to persevere, Augustine explicitly asks the

¹²⁹ See *De correptione et gratia* 2,4, CSEL 92, pp. 221-222; *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 16,33, PL 44, 901.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 18,37, PL 44, 903-904.

¹³² *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 13,25, PL 44, 896.

¹³³ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 17,34ff., PL 44, 902ff.

¹³⁴ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 19,40, PL 44, 905.

¹³⁵ *De dono perseverantiae* 21,56, PL 45, 1028: "Quoniam charitas ex ipso est: sicut dixerunt quos fecit magnos, non solum amatores, verum etiam praedicatores suos."

¹³⁶ *De dono perseverantiae* 21,56, PL 45, 1028: "Inter initium autem fidei et perfectionem perseverantiae, media sunt illa, quibus recte vivimus, quae ipsi etiam donari nobis a Deo fide impetrante consentiunt."

¹³⁷ *De dono perseverantiae* 21,56, PL 44, 1028: "Haec autem omnia, initium scilicet fidei, et caetera usque in finem dona sua, Deus largitum se vocatis suis esse praescivit".

following: Who among faithful dares to boast that he belongs to the predestined?¹³⁸ Once again, the theme of humility is implicitly introduced¹³⁹.

Finally, note Augustine's concern that even the rebuke of sinners is always done with and in love, true gift of the Spirit¹⁴⁰. Precisely because of the fact that one never knows who will be saved, one must pray for the rebuked one so that he will be saved¹⁴¹, for, Augustine continued, our hearts must be changed by love in order even to wish that all will be saved¹⁴².

In the discussion about the status of the freedom of the will in Augustine's theological schema, it is important to see that the "functioning" of this free will is internally related to the presence of love: the will must be *ardentissima*, fully inflamed and empowered by divine love. There is, as it were, an identification of charity and, as such, of a *voluntas ardentissima*¹⁴³. As was said above, love is a gift of God. Without the existence of our free will, however, it is of no real value. One is only enabled to obey God truly and with sweet sincerity when God's love is involved¹⁴⁴.

6. "Harsh predestination" versus prayer

One of the surprising things in Augustine's works that are directed to the monks is the pride of place given to the *oratio fidelium*. According to A. Vinel¹⁴⁵, references to it are, with one

¹³⁸ *De correptione et gratia* 13,40, CSEL 92, 268: "Quis enim ex multitudine fidelium, quamdiu in hac mortalitate uiuitur, in numero praedestinatorum se esse praesumat?"

¹³⁹ Commentators seem to forget that boasting is not appreciated in Scripture; see in this regard, *De correptione et gratia* 8,17, CSEL 92, p. 238. The commend to pray for perseverance reveals that we need it and that God is willing to give it; see, in this regard, *De dono perseverantiae* 2,3, PL 45, 996: "O homo, non uerborum tuorum tantum, uerum etiam cogitationum testis est Deus: si aliquid a tanto diuite ueraciter ac fideliter poscis; ab illo, a quo poscis, te accipere crede quod poscis."

¹⁴⁰ *De correptione et gratia* 6,9, CSEL 92, p. 227; 9,25, CSEL 92, p. 249; 15,46-47, CSEL 92, pp. 276-277.

¹⁴¹ *De correptione et gratia* 14,43, CSEL 92, p. 272: "Sub isto ergo incerto ex caritate adhibenda est cuius exitus ignoratur, et pro illo cui adhibetur orandum est ut sanetur."

¹⁴² *De correptione et gratia* 15,46, CSEL 92, p. 276.

¹⁴³ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 17,33, PL 44, 901.

¹⁴⁴ *De dono perseverantiae* 16,41, PL 45, 1018: "... charitatem, qua uno Deo ueraciter et suaviter oboeditur".

¹⁴⁵ A. VINEL, *Le rôle de la liturgie dans la réflexion doctrinale de saint Augustin contre les Pélagiens*, Louvain-la-Neuve, 1986 (unpublished doctoral dissertation), pp. 205ff.

exception¹⁴⁶, only found in this oeuvre. Augustine is convinced that the *initium fidei* is a gift of God, not from human beings. This is made plain in the story of Paul's conversion¹⁴⁷. On the other hand, prayer is suggested as a means for acquiring a better understanding of the complex relationship between grace and free will¹⁴⁸. It is also a means for gaining a better insight into the mystery of predestination, both from the position of the disciple and from that of the teacher¹⁴⁹. Indeed, prayer is considered to be the right medium for all those who seek to understand. God will give them all the understanding that they require¹⁵⁰. Of course, because prayer is related to faith, only those who have been gifted with faith will be inclined to pray for the empowerment to do what is required of them¹⁵¹.

We are ordered to pray in order that the "nolentes" will be made "volentes". Augustine also suggests that, in such case, the faith of those who pray, "*Dei praevenit gratiam*"¹⁵². The order to pray for others makes clear that faith does not completely depend upon one's own free will¹⁵³. Why should we be exhorted to pray for our enemies, if God was not able and willing to convert them?¹⁵⁴ When the faithful pray, they pray in order that their own faith may grow and that of the unbelievers may begin to become a reality¹⁵⁵. Such prayer supposes (at least a partial) recognition of the will's weakness and

¹⁴⁶ *Opus imperfectum* VI,41, PL 45, 1606.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 2,3-4, PL 44, 963.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 1,1, PL 44, 881: "Quidquid est autem quo pervenire nondum potest vestrae mentis intentio, pacem inter vos et charitatem servantes, a Domino ut intelligatis orate."

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 1,2, PL 44, 961.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 24,46, PL 44, 912.

¹⁵¹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 14,28, PL 44, 898.

¹⁵² *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 8,15, PL 44, 971-972: "Aut si non facit volentes ex nolentibus Deus, utquid orat Ecclesia secundum praeceptum Domini pro persecutoribus suis? (...) Quid ergo oramus pro nolentibus credere, nisi ut Deus in illis operetur et velle? (...) Orat pro non credentibus, quid, nisi ut credant? (...) Si ergo fides orantium Dei praevenit gratiam, numquid eorum fides, pro quibus oratur ut credant, Dei praevenit gratiam?"

¹⁵³ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 14,29, PL 44, 898: "Nam si fides liberi est tantummodo arbitrii, nec datur a Deo, propter quid pro eis qui nolunt credere, oramus ut credant?"

¹⁵⁴ *De dono perseverantiae* 22,60, PL 45, 1029-1030: "Deus enim qui omnia quae praedestinavit implevit, ideo et pro inimicis fidei orare nos voluit; ut hinc intelligeremus, quod ipse etiam infidelibus donet ut credant, et volentes ex nolentibus faciat."

¹⁵⁵ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 11,22, PL 44, 976: "Rogant credentes, ut sibi augeatur fides; rogant pro non credentibus, ut eis donetur fides"; cf. also 14,27, PL 44, 981; *De correptione et gratia* 2,3, CSEL 92, p. 221; 3,5, CSEL 92, pp. 222-223; *De dono perseverantiae* 7,15, PL 45, 1002.

insufficiency. But it also contains a strong belief that God will give the praying one the power not to be led into temptation¹⁵⁶. We can fulfill the requirements, if we want, but since the will is prepared by the Lord (Prov. 8,35 LXX), we must ask him "ut tantum velimus, quantum sufficit ut volendo faciamus"¹⁵⁷. When people do not do the good expected, or do not do it with love, Augustine admonishes them to pray in order that they might receive what they do not yet have¹⁵⁸. Rebuke is considered to be an invitation to the sinner to pray in order that his love, with God's merciful help, will grow and so that, in the end, he finally does what is expected¹⁵⁹. It is important to admonish, teach, exhort, increase, but such activities are only useful when accompanied by prayer to the one who gives all these things¹⁶⁰. When people thank God for the faith of other people, they do so because they believe that this faith is, from its very beginning, also a gift of God¹⁶¹. God prepares our hearts in order that we do not hear the Gospel in vain but so that we are converted and believe¹⁶². The same arguments can also be found in *De dono perseverantiae*. One has to pray in order to receive the gift of perseverance, and, when this is done, it can be looked for expectantly¹⁶³. Again, the Church prays in order that the unbelievers may believe, and that believers might persevere¹⁶⁴. God, from whom come both peace and charity, is also the giver of faith. Augustine again repeats that this is the reason why we pray to God: not only that faith may be increased in those who possess it, but also that it may be given to those who do not yet possess it¹⁶⁵. It is the Church's task to pray that those who are not yet called might be called. To this Augustine adds an interesting idea; could it

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 4,9, PL 44, 887; 13,26, PL 44, 897 (here, Augustine combines prayer for forgiveness and prayer for strength); 24,46, PL 44, 912.

¹⁵⁷ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 16,32, PL 44, 900.

¹⁵⁸ *De correptione et gratia* 2,4, CSEL 92, p. 222.

¹⁵⁹ *De correptione et gratia* 5,7, CSEL 92, p. 224.

¹⁶⁰ *De correptione et gratia* 2,3, CSEL 92, p. 221.

¹⁶¹ *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 19,39, PL 44, 989

¹⁶² *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 19,39, PL 44, 989: "Deus igitur operatur in cordibus hominum, vocatione illa secundum propositum suum, de qua multum locuti sumus, ut non inaniter audiant Evangelium, sed eo audito convertantur et credant". Because of the first part of the sentence, the *sed*, the *eo audito*, I think that *convertantur* is to be understood as reflexive and not passive.

¹⁶³ *De dono perseverantiae* II,3, PL 45, 996: "Si aliquid a tanto divite veraciter ac fideliter poscis, ab illo, a quo poscis, te accipere crede quod poscis."

¹⁶⁴ *De dono perseverantiae* 7,15, PL 44, 1002: "Orat (Ecclesia), ut increduli credant: Deus ergo convertit ad fidem. Orat, ut credentes perseverent: Deus ergo donat perseverantiam usque in finem."

¹⁶⁵ *De dono perseverantiae* 17,44, PL 45, 1021.

not be that those who are predestined are predestined in such a way that they need our prayers in order to receive the grace by which they come to be numbered among the elect?¹⁶⁶ The fact that God knows what we need is not an argument for not (at least not without conviction) praying¹⁶⁷. Again, Augustine states that our prayer proves that God is able to change one's heart and help the saint to persevere¹⁶⁸, as well as that our prayer has a role to play in the process of grace and predestination. In light of the stress on prayer, it should be no surprise that Augustine ended his work on grace and free will with the request that the monks of Hadrumetum should pray for him "ut temperanter et pie et iuste uiuamus in hoc saeculo, exspectantes illam beatam spem, et manifestationem domini et saluatoris nostri Iesu Christi, cui est honor et gloria et regnum cum Patre et Spiritu Sancto in saecula saeculorum"¹⁶⁹.

7. Some concluding remarks

In my opinion, Kraus rightly pointed out that Augustine's views cannot be understood without a reference to God as almighty. In that sense, God does what he wants in heaven and on earth, he does it when he wants it, and no human will can resist God's will¹⁷⁰. Augustine even adds that God does what he wants "de ipsis hominum voluntatibus"¹⁷¹ and that no sin will be done "nisi voluntas Dei"¹⁷². Augustine was convinced that with such position he was in line with Scripture. For example: Augustine understands the story of Saul to teach that God is able to influence human beings' actions. He quotes from 1 Sam. 10,25-27: "Et dimisit Samuel populum, et abiit

¹⁶⁶ *De dono perseverantiae* 22,60, PL 44, 1029: "Et si qui sunt nondum vocati, pro eis ut vocentur oremus? Fortassis enim sic praedestinati sunt, ut nostris orationibus concedantur, et accipiant eandem gratiam, qua velint atque efficiantur electi."

¹⁶⁷ *De dono perseverantiae* 16,39, PL 44, 1017: "Imo cum constet alia Deum, danda etiam non orantibus, sicut initium fidei, alia nonnisi orantibus praeparasse, sicut usque in finem perseverantiam, profecto qui ex se ipso hanc se habere putat, non orat ut habeat."

¹⁶⁸ *De dono perseverantiae* 23,63, PL 45 1031-1032.

¹⁶⁹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 24,46, PL 44, 912.

¹⁷⁰ *De correptione et gratia* 14,45, CSEL 92, 275: "Non est itaque dubitandum, voluntati Dei, qui in coelo et in terra omnia quaecumque voluit fecit, et qui etiam illa quae futura sunt fecit, humanas voluntates non posse resistere, quominus faciat ipse quod vult."

¹⁷¹ *Ibidem*.

¹⁷² *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 16,33, PL 44, 984.

unusquisque in locum suum; et Saul abiit in domum suam in Gabaa; et abierunt potentes *quorum tetigit Dominus corda* cum Saule". Whenever one checks the "shocking" passages in Augustine, one has to admit that Scripture is used as a basis¹⁷³. One can discuss whether Augustine always correctly interpreted Scripture but at the same time, one must agree that Scripture itself is not unproblematic!¹⁷⁴

According to Kraus, Augustine left the Western tradition when emphasizing that grace precedes the free will. Augustine would disagree with such critique. Indeed, in the *Retractationes*, when commenting on *Ad Simplicianum*, Augustine first quoted 1 Cor. 4,7: "Quid autem habes quod non accepisti? Si autem accepisti, quid gloriaris quasi non acceperis?" and then explicitly referred to the title of Cyprian's, *Ad Quirinum* 3,4: "Quod volens etiam martyr Cyprianus ostendere, hoc totum ipso titulo definivit dicens: In nullo gloriandum, quando nostrum nihil sit"¹⁷⁵. Among the texts quoted by Cyprian in order to explain this title, one will find, like in Augustine, 1 Cor. 4,7¹⁷⁶. In other words, Augustine was convinced and not without some reason that he followed the African line of theology as presented by Cyprian.

Further, I suggest that much of what Augustine said on predestination, is said to monks, to those who had already experienced God's overwhelming grace and recognized this in all humility, or, if they had been yet to recognize it, must be warned not to rely on themselves. At the end of *De dono perseverantiae* 21,55¹⁷⁷, inspired by the virtue of humility, Augustine asked his readers not to follow him in all his ideas, unless they found his position compelling¹⁷⁸. He referred

¹⁷³ *De correptione et gratia* 14,45, CSEL 92, pp. 273ff.

¹⁷⁴ It goes without saying that the reception of Paul by Augustine is a matter of debate, but, at the same time, one must admit that Paul himself is not always clear. On Paul's reception by Augustine, see, among others, P. FREDERIKSEN, *Paul and Augustine: Narratives, Orthodox Traditions, and the Retrospective Self*, in *Journal of Theological Studies*, N.S. 37 (1986) 3-34. On the reception of Paul in the West before Augustine, see K. STOWERS, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles*, New Haven, 1994.

¹⁷⁵ See CCSL 57, p. 90. To this text of Cyprian is also referred in *Contra duas epistulas pelagianorum* IV,9,25, CSEL 60, p. 552. In the broader context (IV,8,21-IV,9,27), Cyprian is often quoted in favour of the doctrine of original sin and grace. Other references to this text are found in *De dono perseverantiae* 14,36, PL 45, 1015; 17,43, PL 45, 1020; 19,48, PL 45, 1023; *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 3,7, PL 44, 964.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. CCSL 3, p. 92.

¹⁷⁷ PL 45, 1027-1028.

¹⁷⁸ "Quamvis neminem velim sic amplecti omnia mea, ut me sequatur, nisi in iis in quibus me non errasse perspexerit."

to his *Retractationes* in order to make clear that he himself repeatedly had changed his mind. He added: "Proficienter me existimo Deo miserante scripsisse, non tamen a perfectione coepisse". Perfection does not belong to human beings: the claiming of perfection is rather a sign of arrogance than of truth. Indeed, human beings can only hope that they have made in their life such a progress that at the end of that life perfection, not punishment will be given¹⁷⁹. I do think that this position makes clear that Augustine was willing to accept fair critiques, at least from fellow monks. He could accept disagreement and suggested that in that case people must protect peace and love among each other and pray to God¹⁸⁰.

At this time, Augustine could not accept any form of grace if it was grace that had been given as a result of our efforts. At the same time, the bishop of Hippo, even in the works under discussion, spoke of *merita nostra bona*. These merits were simultaneously the result of God's grace and our efforts: God always gives us the ability to perform merit-caring good works¹⁸¹. The merits are ours and *dona Dei*¹⁸². But, in the long run, all will be the result of grace, even in case of the saints¹⁸³. In other words, if the primacy of grace was protected, Augustine could accept the presence of "our" merits.

I have the impression, that Augustine himself was aware of the "problematic" character of his predestination doctrine, but apparently not of the difficulties one will be confronted with when systematizing it. Near the end of *De dono perseverantiae*, Augustine underlines that one must not present the predestination doctrine to the people in the way he has just finished doing. The preacher must add something like: "You must hope for the gift of perseverance and pray daily for it. By doing this, you may trust that you do belong to the predestined, for God himself grants even our doing of this". In other words, the preacher's message must be one of hope and support, not one of despair¹⁸⁴. Moreover, Augustine is well aware that this kind of teaching cannot be understood by those who are slow at mind or weak in

¹⁷⁹ "Bonae quippe spei est homo, si eum sic proficientem dies ultimus vitae huius invenerit, ut adiciantur ei quae proficiente defuerunt, et perficiendus quam puniendus potius iudicetur."; *De dono perseverantiae* 21,55, PL 45, 1028.

¹⁸⁰ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 1,1, PL 44, 881.

¹⁸¹ *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 6,13, PL 44, 889.

¹⁸² *De gratia et libero arbitrio* 6,15, PL 44, 890: "Si enim merita nostra sic intellexerint, ut etiam ipsa dona Dei esse cognoscerent, non esset reprobanda ista sententia ...".

¹⁸³ *De correptione et gratia* 13,42, CSEL 92, p. 271.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. *De dono perseverantiae* 22,62, PL 45, 1030-1031; cf. also his hesitant attitude concerning the preaching of rejection in the previous chapter.

faith, but this is not a matter of life or death: more important is that they pay attention to their prayers so that they may persevere¹⁸⁵.

This is not to say that Augustine's views are in no way problematic¹⁸⁶. This is the case when the fate of the unbaptized children is discussed. Augustine considered the baptism of children as a grace that shows the magnanimity of God's goodness to all the faithful¹⁸⁷, but also accepted that the unbaptized were sent to hell. One does not appreciate the appeal of Augustine on the fate of children as a proof for the truth of predestination¹⁸⁸. The idea that God wants to show what human beings can do with his help and what they in fact are without this help, suggests that God is more of a tyrant than a loving father¹⁸⁹. Especially in the case of infants, one might ask what kind of God is the one who does not save children, especially in the case where it is the parents who are longing for their baptism¹⁹⁰. It is, within the context of personal autonomy and responsibility, also embarrassing to read that Augustine held that post lapsarian human free will suffices for evil acts, but is too weak for doing good acts¹⁹¹. Of course, human beings are capable of giving up faith "usque ad mortem"¹⁹². That human pride must be punished is an idea that can be found in Stoic philosophy. Still, the question remains: why must God use such draconic means in order to realize this¹⁹³.

It seems to me that several of the "problematic" positions can be explained if a proper distinction is made between the psychological and metaphysical level. On the psychological level, God is

¹⁸⁵ Cf. *De dono perseverantiae* 23,63, PL 45, 1031.

¹⁸⁶ Cf. J. WETZEL, *Snares of Truth. Augustine on Free Will and Predestination*, in R. DODARO & G. LAWLESS (eds.), *Augustine and his Critics. Essays in Honour of Gerald Bonner*, London-New York, 2000, pp. 124-141, esp. pp. 126-130.

¹⁸⁷ *De dono perseverantiae* 17,41, PL 44, 1018: "Sed mirabilior et fidelibus evidentior largitas bonitatis Dei est, quod etiam parvulis, quibus obedientia non est illius aetatis ut detur, datur haec gratia."

¹⁸⁸ Cf. *De praedestinatione sanctorum* 12,24, PL 44, 977ff.; *De correptione et gratia* 8,18, CSEL 92, p. 239.

¹⁸⁹ *De correptione et gratia* 10,28, CSEL 92, pp. 252-253; 13,42, CSEL 92, p. 271; cf. also *De dono perseverantiae* 11,25, PL 45, 1007-1008: "Itaque misericordiam eius in his qui liberantur, et veritatem in his qui puniuntur, sine dubitatione credamus: neque inscrutabilia scrutari, aut investigabilia vestigare conemur." In a sense, one has the impression that Augustine on the one hand asks to accept the given situation as such, on the other hand, he invites us not to try to understand it; cf. also 8,19, PL 45, 1003: "Voluntate autem sua cadit, qui cadit; et voluntate Dei stat, qui stat." See also 11,23, PL 45, 1005-1006.

¹⁹⁰ *De dono perseverantiae* 11,31, PL 45, 1011-1012.

¹⁹¹ *De correptione et gratia* 11,31, CSEL 92, p. 256.

¹⁹² *De correptione et gratia* 12,35, CSEL 92, p. 262.

¹⁹³ *De correptione et gratia* 12,37, CSEL 92, p. 264.

experienced as a loving God, who takes the first initiative in the *ordo salutis*. At the same time, his love is experienced as an invitation to which people are willing to answer in a positive way, simply because it is exalted as the path toward ultimate happiness. On a metaphysical level, a cogent reflection on God's almightiness led Augustine to a position in which freedom, love, grace and prayer while present are nevertheless underestimated. I would suggest that one really respects Augustine's ideas when one is willing to respect (if not also accept) the paradoxical "cohabitation" of dogmatic ideas and experienced spirituality. If this excise has made clear that neither a dogmatic systematization nor a pious "spiritualisation" do justice to Augustine's positions, it has truly been an *opus prodigum*.

Mathijs LAMBERIGTS

Aussi justifiées qu'elles étaient, ces corrections ont tout de même l'air de dépasser le seul niveau de l'historiographie. Il y va aussi d'une certaine sympathie qui est basée sur la conviction que, mondialement, la position julienne est plus compréhensible, plus acceptable, que celle d'Augustin. Julien n'avait-il pas raison en soutenant

¹ Ainsi que l'écrit M. Lamberigts, dans *Julien d'Arsinoë: Juste Préjugé ou Particular Explanat in the Role of Julian of Arsinoë, dans Augustinus 32* (2002) 175-194.

² Comme l'écrit M. Lamberigts, *Jul. 30: "the struggle with which Augustine struggled with the Pelagians led in part to the fact that dogmatic theology, rooted in doctrinal presuppositions, transformed Augustine into a system that was quickly qualified as heretical"*, pp. 176. Et aussi: "We are not used to argue on the basis of the present survey that progress in history of dogma and the Pelagian controversy has led to a degree of 'dogmatic' distortion", pp. 182.

³ Notamment F. Löffel, *Julian von Arsinoë: Studien zu seinen Leben, seinen Werk, seiner Lehre und ihrer Überlieferung*, Leiden 2001. Bien que ce soit avant par à la période de la lutte pelagienne à propos de l'un d'un avec avec l'écrit spéculatif de V.M. Darcourt, *Die Entstehung der Christologie Augustinus*, Tübingen 1999.

⁴ Voir M. Lamberigts, *loc. cit.*, pp. 178-180. The problem was also he even as one of the elements of the reception of a pelagian controversy. Voir L. J. 1999, *Augustine on Predestination: Consequences for the Reception into Augustinus 32* (2002) 241-72.